HR CONNECT

Human Resources for the Northern Ireland Civil Service and the Northern Ireland Office

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Candidate Information Booklet

IRC330592

Higher Professional Technical Officer (HPTO) Deputy Conservation Manager

Completed Application Forms must be submitted to HRConnect no later than 12 noon (UK time) on
Friday 18th December 2026

Please retain a copy of this booklet for your reference throughout the selection process.

Department for Communities

Supporting people, building communities and shaping places

Communication between HRConnect and you

HRConnect will issue electronically as many competition communications as possible, you should therefore check your email account, including junk mail folder, to make sure that you don't miss any important communications in relation to this competition. There may, however, still be a necessity to issue some correspondence by hard copy mail.

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FOREWORD

The NICS comprises nine departments that support the Northern Ireland Executive and Ministers. We do this by developing and implementing government policies and legislation and delivering key public services in areas such as health, public finances, social development, justice, education, regeneration, environment, culture, agriculture, economic development, employment and transport. In addition, the Public Prosecution Service is a non Ministerial Department staffed by civil servants.

All civil servants are appointed on merit and on the basis of fair and open competition. They are expected to carry out their role with dedication and commitment to the NI Civil Service's core values: integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality.

The NICS is seeking to fill a HPTO Deputy Conservation Manager role that requires specific skills and experience. Applications are invited from candidates who meet the eligibility criteria, to apply for this opportunity and challenge.

This booklet provides further information on the key responsibilities of the HPTO Deputy Conservation Manager role in the Department for Communities and sets out the skills and competencies required. We have also included important information on the selection process.

BACKGROUND

The Department for Communities (DfC) delivers a diverse range of functions that impact on the lives of everyone in our society. Our common purpose is to make this a great place to live for everybody by supporting people, building communities and shaping places.

DfC is the largest of the nine NICS Departments and works with 15 Arm's Length Bodies and a number of Advisory Groups. Around 8,500 people are employed by the Department, accounting for one third of NICS employees. The final 2025-26 budget for the Department included Annually Managed Expenditure (AME) of £10.4 billion largely for social security and pension payments. The Department plays an important role in the lives of many people and communities in Northern Ireland.

The Department is made up of six Business Groups:

- Communities, Place and Local Government
- Corporate Services
- Engaged Communities
- Housing and Sustainability
- Operational Delivery
- Work & Health

Role of the Department

The Department's main functions include:

- The promotion of a healthy housing market and the provision of decent, affordable, sustainable homes and housing support services.
- A social welfare system including focused support to the most disadvantaged areas.
- Providing training and support to jobseekers and employers.
- Bringing divided communities together by creating urban centres which are sustainable, welcoming and accessible to live, work and relax in peace.
- Supporting Local Government to deliver effective public services.
- Maximising public benefits from the culture, arts and leisure sectors.
- Tackling disadvantage and promoting equality of opportunity by reducing poverty, promoting and protecting interests of children, older people, people with disabilities, and other socially excluded groups, addressing inequality and disadvantage.

The vacant post is located within Historic Environment Division (HED) of the Engaged Communities Group.

Historic Environment Division

HED works in collaboration with a very wide range of individuals and organisations in the public, private and third sectors to ensure that, together,

we record, protect, conserve and promote our heritage in ways which support and sustain our economy and our communities. HED provides expertise and skills, seeking to improve the understanding, caring for and appreciation of our heritage, and to ensure a suitable balance between respecting a rich past and building a successful future.

The Division includes Heritage Records and Designation Branch; Heritage Development and Change Branch; Heritage Advice and Regulation Branch; Heritage Buildings Designation Branch; State Care Heritage Branch; State Care Operations Branch; Central Administration and Projects Branch.

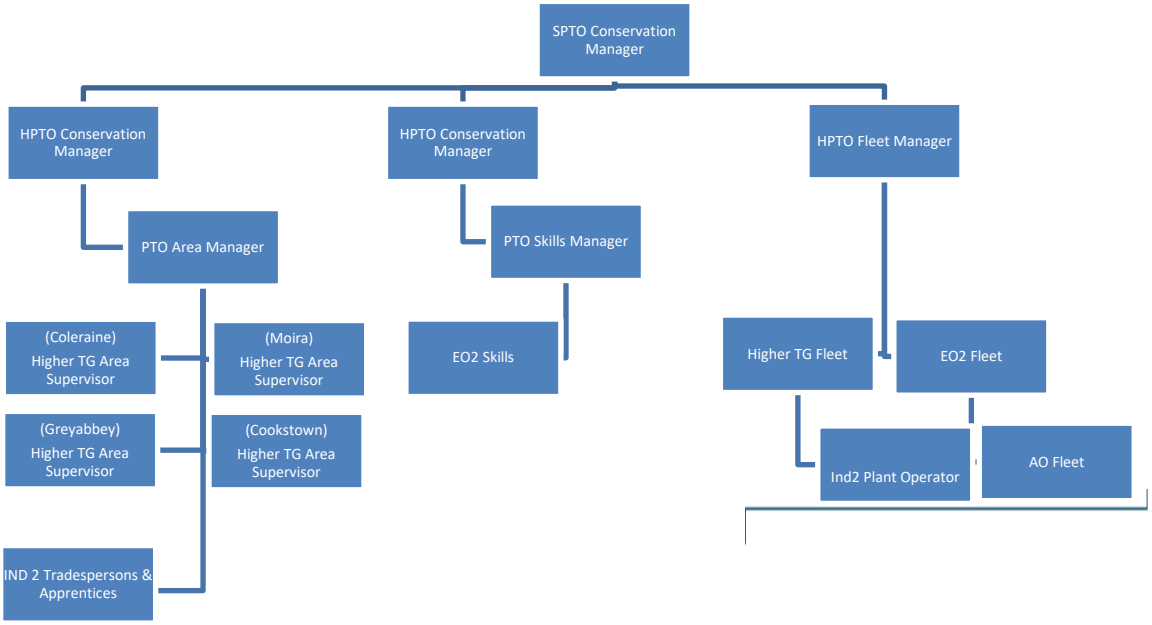
The HPTO Deputy Conservation Manager sits within State Care Heritage Branch, Conservation Works Team (CWT). The main purpose of CWT is the maintenance and conservation of more than 180 State Care Monuments (SCMs) within our care. This includes the presentation, enhancement and interpretation of State Care sites; managing resources; establishing and maintaining relationships with Borough Councils, landowners and other stakeholders; working in partnership with others to manage SCMs; and contributing to events management and activities at SCMs.

The CWT is based in a number of depots around Northern Ireland. Its main location is at Moira, where the NI Heritage Skills Centre is also based. The Centre currently provides a specialist traditional and heritage skills training programme in partnership with The King's Foundation.

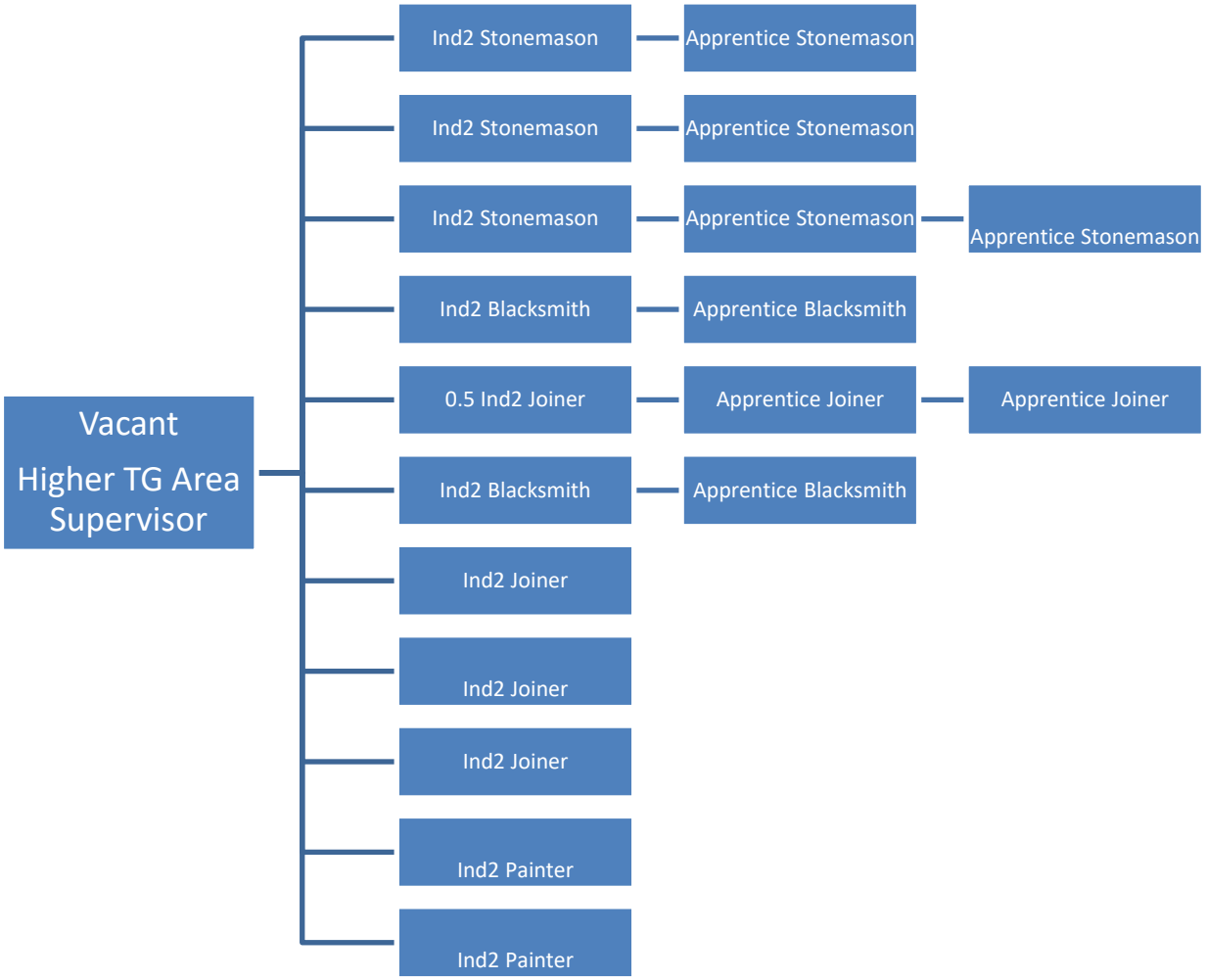
Responsibilities relevant to the current vacancy arise primarily from The Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995, which provides for the acquisition and guardianship of historic monuments, and their care and presentation to the public.

Organisational Chart

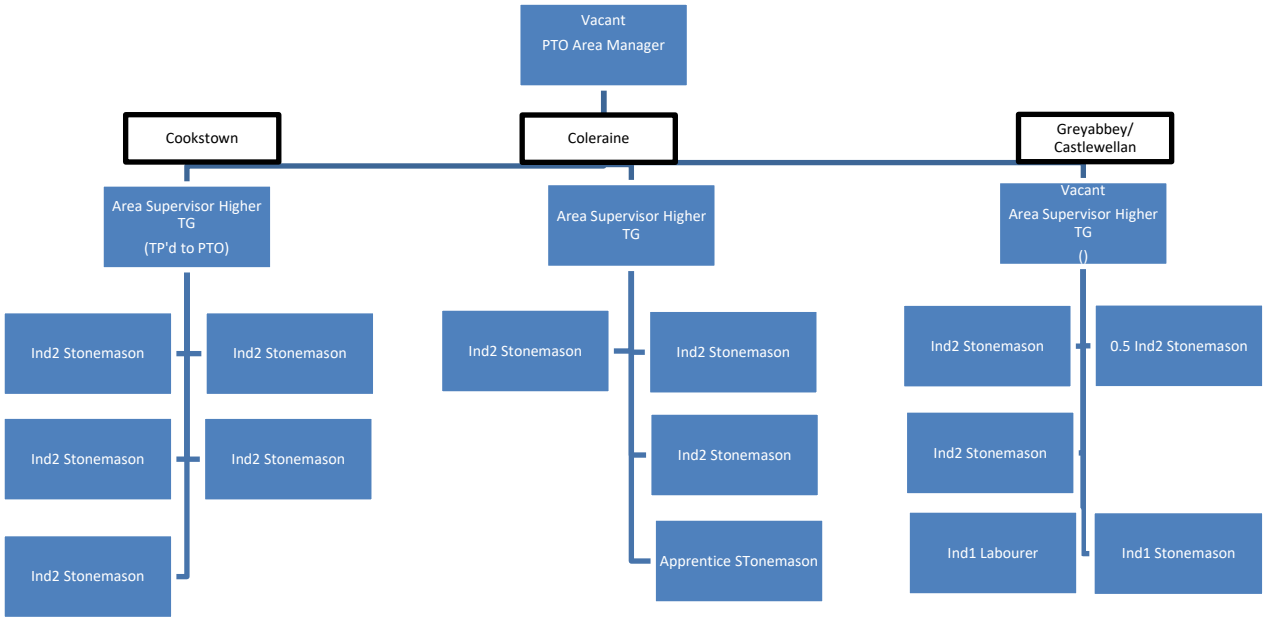
Moira Depot



Moira Depot Industrial Staff



Cookstown/Coleraine/ Greyabbey Staff



KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Deputy Conservation Manager will be expected to manage the CWT in delivering conservation management at HED sites in support of overall objectives. The main duties and responsibilities of the postholder will include:

- Day-to-day management of CWT, managing a dedicated team of around 20+ staff including those working at remote locations.
- Operational decision making in relation to staffing and prioritisation of works for CWT.
- Work with senior management to agree and implement Divisional and Branch objectives.
- Develop a forward work programme for CWT, including analysis of current and proposed projects to develop, implement and monitor an agreed schedule of works.
- Provide leadership in relation to conservation methods and best practice.
- Work closely with other colleagues across HED to ensure works adhere to conservation principles, such as the use of lime mortars as required.
- Report on and manage their team's budget and ensure Departmental and NICS procedures are followed in the procurement of goods and services.
- Where required, preparing and overseeing external contracts.
- Ensure CWT adherence to all required Health & Safety Regulations and compliance with the relevant training and record keeping.
- Manage CWT resources to maintain availability of appropriate skilled labour, in conjunction with senior management.
- Contribute to HED's efforts to promote Heritage Skills, including participating on various working groups.
- Participate as a member of HED's Heritage Skills Centre, including working closely with a range of internal and external stakeholders to develop and deliver Heritage Skills Programmes to students. Overseeing the provision of training by CWT staff, NVQ Level 3 assessment and related administration.
- Ensure the provision and availability of the necessary equipment for the team to undertake maintenance and conservation duties, including the fleet of departmental works vehicles.
- Driving Departmental vehicles to remote sites with equipment across Northern Ireland will be required aswell as attendance at meetings and training events across the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland.

The above list is not exhaustive but provides a good indication of the main duties of the post. The emphasis on particular duties will vary over time according to business needs.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

There are currently 2 permanent, full time vacancies.

Further appointments may be made from this competition should NICS positions become vacant which require the same eligibility criteria and have similar duties and responsibilities.

Location

The posts will be based at 7A Station Road, Moira BT67 0NE.

It is envisaged that some element of home working and/or remote working may be possible, in line with the NICS Hybrid Working policy and business need.

Salary

Salary will be within the £37,694 - £38,990 (under review) within which pay progression will be performance related.

Starting salary will be at the minimum of the scale. If the successful candidate is an existing civil servant, normal pay on promotion/re-grading arrangements will apply.

Pensions

The NICS offers all employees an attractive pension package. You'll find further details on the Civil Service Pensions (Northern Ireland) website at www.finance-ni.gov.uk/civilservicepensions-ni

Holidays

In addition to public and privilege holidays, currently 12 days, the annual leave allowance will be 25 days, rising to 30 days after 5 years' service.

Hours of Work

The successful candidate will be required to work 37 hours excluding meal breaks, Monday to Thursday 08:00 to 16:30 and Friday 08:00 to 13:15.

Travel

These posts will require the successful candidates to drive Departmental vehicles on official duty, the successful candidates must possess a full current driving licence to enable the post holder to drive in Northern Ireland.

Travel throughout Northern Ireland will be required and travel nationally and internationally may also be required on a regular basis.

Vetting

An appointment will be dependent on the individual satisfying the vetting requirements for the post. The level of vetting required for this post is Baseline Standard with Basic Access NI clearance.

Probation

Confirmation of appointment will be dependent upon the satisfactory completion of a probationary period of 1 year. If performance, conduct or attendance during this period is not satisfactory the appointment may be terminated.

Career Development

The NICS is committed to career development and offers attractive career prospects across a wide variety of roles and professions. Career development is an integral part of the performance management system. Personal Development Plans identify learning and development needs with a view to enhancing skills and capabilities. NI Civil Servants have access to a wide range of internal job opportunities, including secondments with external organisations and are encouraged and supported in proactively managing their career.

Conflict of Interest

It is a basic requirement of all Civil Servants that their private activities should not bring them in to conflict with their official duties.

Conflict of Interest is not limited to the individual's own private, financial or other interests, as family, friends and associates may also have dealings which affect the Department's business directly or indirectly. Therefore to avoid any conflict or potential conflict and to demonstrate impartiality to the public at all times, an officer must not, without prior approval, engage in any activity which could be considered to be in conflict with official business.

As such, to protect employees and the Department from public criticism, it will be mandatory for the successful candidate to complete a Conflict of Interest declaration on appointment.

Further Information

Applicants wishing to learn more about the post before deciding to apply may telephone Jill Cherry on 028 90 819376 or email jill.cherry@communities-ni.gov.uk

If you have any questions about the competition process, or require any documentation in an alternative format, you should contact HRConnect on 0800 1 300 330 or email: recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must have, by the closing date for applications:

1a. A degree in a Construction related discipline;

AND

1b. A minimum of 1 years' conservation-led construction project management and site experience;

OR

2a. A Level 5 qualification in a Construction related discipline;

AND

2b. A minimum of 2 years' construction experience to include at least 1 years' conservation-led construction project management and site experience;

AND

3. Possess a full current driving licence to enable the post holder to drive in Northern Ireland.

Applications will also be considered from applicants with relevant formal qualifications considered by the selection panel to be of an equivalent or higher standard to those stated.

Relevant or **equivalent** qualifications: give the type of qualification and date awarded (the date awarded is the date on which you were notified of your result by the official awarding body). If you believe your qualification is equivalent to the one required, the onus is on you to provide the panel with details of modules studied etc so that a well-informed decision can be made.

You will be required to provide documentary evidence of your qualifications at interview so please ensure you have these readily available.

Disability Requirements and Reasonable Adjustment Requests

We wish to ensure all applicants have the opportunity to perform to the best of their ability. If you require any form of reasonable adjustment to participate in the selection process, please note this in the box provided on your application form and include details of your disability and the specific adjustment you need. We will consider all requests for reasonable adjustments for any stage of this recruitment process.

To ensure you are fully supported in the process, you may provide relevant supporting information regarding your adjustment request – for example, an Occupational Psychologist report or a GP's medical statement.

Information to support your request should be sent to HRConnect at recruitment@hrconnect.nigov.net as soon as possible following submission of your application but no later than the competition closing date **(18th December 2026)**. Please mark your correspondence with the competition reference number **IRC330592** and title it 'Supporting information for reasonable adjustment request'.

Please note:

- **You should ensure that you provide evidence of your experience in your application form, giving length of experience, examples and dates as required.**
- **It is not sufficient to simply list your duties and responsibilities.**
- **The selection panel will not make assumptions from the title of the applicant's post or the nature of the organisation as to the skills and experience gained.**
- **If you do not provide sufficient detail, including the appropriate dates needed to meet the eligibility criteria, the selection panel will reject your application.**
- **The examples you provide should be concise and relevant to the criteria. This is very important as the examples which you provide may be explored at interview and you may need to be prepared to talk about these in detail if you are invited to interview. It is your unique role the panel are interested in, not that of your team or division.**
- **State clearly your personal involvement in any experience you quote. State "I" statements e.g. I planned meetings, I managed a budget, I prepared a presentation. It is how you actually carried out a piece of work that the panel will be interested in.**
- **ONLY the details provided by you in your application form (the employment history and eligibility criteria) will be provided to the selection panel for the purpose of determining your eligibility for the post. Please do not include your name in the employment history or eligibility criteria sections.**
- **No additional information or evidence provided in support of your experience will be considered at any time after the closing date for applications.**
- **The NICS Competency framework can be accessed via www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk**

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

There are 2 stages to the selection process, which will include:

1. An Eligibility Sift; and
2. A competence based interview.

ELIGIBILITY SIFT

This is an assessment of the evidence provided in your application form against the eligibility criteria. Successful candidates at sift will progress to the next stage of selection.

COMPETENCE BASED INTERVIEW

Selection panels will design questions to test the applicant's knowledge and experience in each of the areas set out below and award marks accordingly.

No notes or personal documentation may be brought into the interview room.

1. Delivering at Pace

Marks available: 20

2. Making Effective Decisions

Marks available: 20 Minimum Standard : 12

3. Leading and Communicating

Marks available: 20

4. Delivering Value for Money

Marks available: 20

5. Managing a Quality Service

Marks available: 20

Total Marks Available: 100
Overall Pass Mark: 60

COMPETENCE BASED INTERVIEWS

Selection panels will design questions to test the applicant's knowledge and experience in each of the above areas and award marks accordingly.

No notes or personal documentation may be brought into the interview room.

INTERVIEWS

It is intended that interviews for this post will take place in Moira Works Depot, 7A Station Road, Moira BT67 0NE during week commencing 1st February 2027.

NICS COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

The selection process will assess candidates against the NICS competency framework at level 3.

The NICS competency framework sets out how all NICS employees should work. It puts the Civil Service values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality at the heart of everything they do, and it aligns to the three high-level leadership behaviours that every civil servant needs to model as appropriate to their role and level of responsibility: Set Direction; Engage People and Deliver Results.

Competencies are the skills, knowledge and behaviours that lead to successful performance. The framework outlines ten competencies, which are grouped into three clusters. The competencies are intended to be discrete and cumulative, with each level building on the levels below i.e. a person demonstrating a competency at level 3 should be demonstrating levels 1 and 2 as a matter of course.

The Northern Ireland Civil Service competency framework can be accessed via www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk

It is important that all candidates familiarise themselves with the competency framework as this forms the basis of selection process. Should you require assistance in accessing the competency framework please contact HRConnect.

GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

APPLICATION FORM

You can apply online at www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk**.**

Please refer to the Candidate Information Booklet before making your application and retain a copy for your reference. The application form is designed to ensure that applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the competition requirements and the eligibility/shortlisting criteria. **All** parts of the application form **must** be completed by the applicant before this application can be considered. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.

Please note:

- We will not accept CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of or in addition to completed application forms, unless it is specifically requested in the application form and candidate information booklet.
- All applications must be submitted by the advertised closing date and time.
- Information in support of your application will not be accepted after the closing date for receipt of applications.
- HRConnect will not examine applications until after the closing deadline.
- Do not use acronyms, complex technical detail etc. State for the reader who may not know your employer, your branch or your job.
- Only the employment history, eligibility and shortlisting sections will be made available to the panel.
- When completing the online application, your information is saved as you move through the pages. You may leave the application at any time, providing you have clicked on the 'Save & Continue' button. Once your application has been submitted the option to edit will no longer be available.
- The session timeout for the online application is 40 minutes, if you do not save or change page within this time you will automatically be logged out and any unsaved work will be lost.
- You must click SUBMIT once you have finished your online application. You will receive an acknowledgement email. Please contact HRConnect if you do not receive an acknowledgment email within 24 hrs.

Help with making your application

You can get advice or assistance with making an application from your local Jobs and Benefits Office - contact details are available on NIDirect: https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/jobs-and-benefits-offices

You can also get advice or assistance from local disability employment organisations. To find out more about local disability employment organisations contact Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment (NIUSE), an umbrella group for individuals and organisations promoting opportunities for people with disabilities to access and maintain employment, email info@niuse.org.uk, tel. 0044 (0)28 71 377709, text phone 0044 (0) 28 71 372077

Artificial Intelligence can be a useful tool to support your application, however, all examples and statements provided must be truthful, factually accurate and taken directly from your own experience. Where plagiarism has been identified (presenting the ideas and experiences of others, or generated by artificial intelligence, as your own) applications may be withdrawn. Please see our candidate guidance, via the link below for more information on appropriate and inappropriate use.

Artificial Intelligence & Recruitment Guidance

INTERVIEW PREPARATION

If this is your first experience of a competence-based interview, bear in mind that it does not require you to:

- Talk through previous jobs or appointments from start to finish;
- Provide generalised information as to your background and experience; or
- Provide information that is not specifically relevant to the competence the question is designed to test.

A competence-based interview does however require you to:

- Focus exclusively, in your responses, on your ability to fulfill the competences required for effective performance in the role; and
- Provide specific examples of your experience in relation to the required competence areas.

In preparation for the interview you may wish to think about having a clear structure for each of your examples, such as:

- Situation – briefly outline the situation;
- Task – what was your objective, what were you trying to achieve;
- Action – what did you actually do, what was your unique contribution;
- Result – what happened, what was the outcome, what did you learn.

The panel will ask you to provide specific examples from your past experience to demonstrate the range of behaviours associated with the competences being assessed. You should therefore come to the interview prepared to discuss in detail a range of examples which best illustrate your skills and abilities in each competence area. You may draw examples from any area of your work / life experiences.

For professional and technical posts, questions may be framed in the context of professional elements of the post.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Merit Principle

In accordance with the Office of the Civil Service Commissioners' Recruitment Code, appointments to the NICS are made under the 'merit principle', where the best person for any given post is selected in fair and open competition.

Further information on the Civil Service Commissioners can be found at www.nicscommissioners.org.

NICSHR Privacy Notice

NICSHR are committed to protecting your privacy. HRConnect manage job applications on behalf of NICSHR, in line with the NICSHR privacy notice available via www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk

Offers of Employment

Candidates will only receive one offer of appointment which, if not accepted, will generally result in withdrawal from the competition.

Changes in personal circumstances and contact details

Please ensure HRConnect Recruitment Team is informed immediately of any changes in personal circumstances. It is important that HRConnect Recruitment Team has up to date contact details for you. If your email address changes then it is your responsibility to inform the Recruitment Team at HRConnect.

(Note for existing NICS staff – An update to your employee records will not result in your applicant profile being updated. You must still inform HRConnect Recruitment Team of a change in contact details.)

Transgender Requirements

Should you currently be going through a phase of transition in respect of gender and wish this to be taken into consideration, in confidence, to enable you to attend any part of the assessment process please contact HRConnect. Details of this will only be used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process.

Merit List

HRConnect will allocate a candidate (or candidates) to a vacancy (or vacancies) in the order listed. It is presently intended that the merit list for this competition should remain extant for a period of one year. However you should be aware that circumstances may arise in the future where it will be necessary to extend the currency of the merit list for a further period. The merit list will only be extended where cogent practical reasons for doing so arise.

Documentation

Identification documents to satisfy the Nationality and Security requirements of the post will be required. Further details regarding acceptable documentation will be issued with an invitation to attend for assessment.

You should ensure that the required documents are readily available. Failure to provide the appropriate documentation when requested will result in your application being rejected.

Right to Work and Nationality Requirements

HRConnect must ensure that you are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom and satisfy the Nationality requirements for appointment to the NICS. Please note **ALL** applicants for external recruitment will be subject to a Nationality validation check.

Applicants must be either:

(i) UK national; or

(ii) National of the Republic of Ireland; or

(iii) National of a Commonwealth country; or

(iv) Nationals of the EU, Switzerland, Iceland or Liechtenstein with settled or pre-settled status under the European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS); or

(v) Nationals of the EU, Switzerland, Iceland or Liechtenstein have made a valid application for settled or pre-settled status under European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS).

(vi) Relevant EEA or Turkish nationals working in the Civil Service or who have built up the right to work in the Civil Service; or

(vii) Certain family members of the relevant EU, EEA, Swiss & Turkish nationals
ALL candidates are required to state their nationality and the category they are applying under in the Right to Work and Nationality Requirements response box in Part 1 of your application form.

For candidates applying under categories iii – vii you are required to provide the confirmation of Right to Work and Nationality Requirements, including your 'Share code' in the response box in Part 1 of your application form.

You should provide details of your 'Share code' in the 'Share code' field which will be used to validate your Right to Work in the UK. You can find further detail on obtaining your 'Share code' here.

Failure to provide the requested information **WILL** result in your application being rejected.

EU Settlement Scheme EU, other EEA, Swiss citizens and family members provides guidance on EUSS and certain family members.

Where a candidate has a Right to Work status which has a time limitation, ongoing checks will be in place to ensure the Right to Work is maintained.

Further guidance on Nationality requirements is available in the Nationality Guidance section of the NICS Recruitment website.

Security

1. Baseline Personnel Security Standard

For this post in the NICS the level of vetting is a Baseline Standard For this check you will be required to provide the following:

a) Your passport *OR*
b) A document verifying your permanent National Insurance number (e.g. P45, P60 or National Insurance card) *AND* your birth certificate which includes the names of your parents (long version).
c) A specimen signature at any assessment event and have this validated against passport, driving licence, application form etc.

Further information regarding the Baseline Personnel Security Standard, including other acceptable documents is available via Government baseline personnel security standard - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

We will organise a Criminal Record Check on all applicants to be carried out by AccessNI. The category of AccessNI check required for this post is;

Basic Disclosure Certificate

You should not put off applying for a post because you have a conviction. We deal with all criminal record information in a confidential manner, and information relating to convictions is destroyed after a decision is made. Further information regarding policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders and the vetting process is available at www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk in Recruitment Policy and Procedures manual.

Security Policy for AccessNI Disclosure Information is available at www.nicsrecruitment.org.uk under Useful Information.

The AccessNI code of practice can be accessed via www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni

The AccessNI code of practice can be accessed via www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni.

Those applicants who are being considered for appointment will be contacted by HRConnect, normally after interview/test, and will be asked to complete the AccessNI application form. Please note that a request to complete this form should not be seen as a guarantee of an offer of appointment.

Failure to complete the application form and return it within the specified time will be regarded as 'no longer interested in the position' and your application will be withdrawn.

Criminal Record information is subject to the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978.

Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form

Please note the Equal Opportunities monitoring section of the application form is mandatory in order to submit an application.

For guidance on completing the Monitoring Form and to read the NICS Equal Opportunities Policy Statement please refer to the DoF website www.finance-ni.gov.uk.

Applications from Protestants, females, young people (people under the age of 35), people with a disability and people from minority ethnic communities are particularly welcomes for this post.

The Northern Ireland Civil Service is an Equal Opportunities Employer.
All applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit

Feedback

The Northern Ireland Civil Service is committed to ensuring that the processes used to recruit and select staff are fair and in accordance with the principles of the Civil Service Commissioners Code. We are consequently committed to providing feedback in respect of decisions taken in determining eligibility/shortlisting as well as at interview. Feedback in respect of eligibility/shortlisting will be communicated automatically to those candidates who fail to satisfy any criteria. All requests for feedback are welcome.

THIS INFORMATION PACK DOES NOT FORM PART OF
CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT